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A POINT OF VIEW FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGION.

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ONE of the signs of the times from which we derive assurance of progress toward unity of knowledge is the growing feeling, in the minds of scientists and scholars, of the unity of the sciences; in other words, the renewed belief in philosophy as the central interpretative principle of all sciences. Whether or not we agree with those, such as Paulsen, Wundt, and others, who conceive that the Greek thought of philosophy, as the sum total of all scientific knowledge, must be accepted as the determining concept of philosophy, we must certainly recognize the interrelation and dependence of the sciences, and the necessity of a study of that interrelation and dependence; which study must, in a true sense, be philosophy. Every science and every discipline must make a part of its work the setting forth of the principles by which it relates itself to other sciences and disciplines. And it is not simply the moral or theoretical duty of a science or discipline to show, as soon as it attains a consciousness of itself, its poles of relativity to others, but it is a practical necessity to its own development. Each science needs the others as auxiliary sciences; isolated from them it cannot solve its own problems. Every branch of natural science, for example, presupposes the rest: biology presupposes chemistry and physics; physics presupposes chemistry. So all the natural sciences are necessary one to the others.

It is a part of the philosophic temper in modern thought that religion, which is assuredly one of the most interesting facts of life, has come to be studied both scientifically and philosophically; that is, both as to individual fact and as to the relationship of facts. It is, however, a curious characteristic of modern study of religion that students find it difficult to determine whether the concept according to which religion shall be studied is predominantly scientific or philosophical, and whether it shall

be considered chiefly as fact or as a sort of principle of relativity between facts. One school speaks of the "science of religion;" and that school studies religious phenomena, rites, and customs, like sacrifice and prayer, and other religious observances. Another school speaks of the "philosophy of religion," and studies the intellectual and moral relations of those fact- and thought-phenomena which are embraced under the term "religion." But in whichever way we study religion, we meet in that study, as in all others, with a fact or a law which becomes necessarily the object of such study; and that fact or law is something which we find between us and the real object of our study—an intermediary thing which is not the ultimate object, but which is studied as the object. The physicist who is studying matter, for example, is not studying matter, but human thought about matter. The thing which makes a desk a desk, or a plant a plant, or a rock a rock, is not direct knowledge of the essential and ultimate desk, or plant, or rock, but the consensus of human observers and thinkers about those objects that they are such. It is a simple and trite observation that we do not know the ultimate and essential nature of wood, plants, and stones; but it becomes important to keep in mind, when we are meditating upon what really is our knowledge of wood, plants, and stones, all that we really know when we are studying and thinking of those objects. There lie between the human mind and what Kant calls the "noumena" phenomena; that is, sensations—the terms in which the things themselves are registered upon the mind. Consequently there must be a peculiar and direct relation of all sciences, including religion, to psychology and epistemology, or to the facts and laws of the human mind and the method of its knowledge; for, however definitely objective a particular science or discipline be to us, there lie between it and the mind these intermediary objects, which are the direct objects of our investigation and thought, covering the real objects, and into which for knowledge the real objects translate or symbolize themselves; and those intermediary objects are, partly at least, the effects of our mental operations, and are, partly at least, of the same nature as the mind. The object of study, whether of material science, or of human

history, or of philosophy, is thought—is the reaction of the mind upon impressions. The nature of the source of those impressions—what it is that makes them, what the noumena are—we do not know and cannot guess. The student of the things of the mind and of the spirit is on the same ground, and is dealing with the same object-matter as that with which the student of the material world is dealing. Hence, epistemology, or the method and law of knowledge, becomes of primary and essential importance in all study and thought. Every real scientific investigator must be something of a psychologist and philosopher. The day is forever past when the competent scientist can be merely a fact specialist. He is bound to think of that intermediary object which lies between him and his real object, and is bound also to think of the method according to which he approaches, or is approached by, the object of his investigation and study. He must be a man of visual perspective and philosophic insight. The great scientists, whose names are illustrious in their own special subjects, have in these modern days essayed comments—and these comments are almost uniformly large-sighted and valuable—on the psychological and philosophical implications and relations of every particular science.

But, to return to our caption, what we mean by “A Point of View for the Study of Religion” is the epistemological point of view. That is to say, we are to consider carefully our real object, thought, and the method of our knowledge of that object. We may ignore—we *must* ignore—as do the scientists, the absolute nature of the *Ding an sich*. We are not to attempt to get at the absolute and ultimate nature of the noumenon in religion. Our point of departure for an investigation of the subject of religion is from those facts or objects which are produced in the human heart and mind by certain stimuli, of the nature of whose sources we are ignorant. It has been the mistake of theology that it has made the attempt, which has been made by some students of material science, to get at the metaphysics of the thing by means of an analysis and a test-tube; that is to say, it has discussed the nature and being of God, and has landed itself in a series of dogmas about God. The scientific

study of religion makes no such attempt, but concerns itself with those religious phenomena of action and thought which are universal both in time and place, and which are the effects of our mental reaction upon the *Ding an sich* of religion.

The scientific and philosophic study of religion is, to speak roughly, about thirty years old, coming in with the reaction against a speculative philosophy and a speculative theology which were the bases of the older study of religion, even that of Locke and Hume; for, though Locke and Hume followed Bacon in the work of laying foundations for a scientific study of the world of human thought and human history, they did not advance to the thought of a real scientific study of religion. The publication of Professor Max Müller's lectures before the Royal Institution of London was one of the first literary evidences that the foundations of a science of religion were being laid. Indeed, that distinguished scholar, whatever may have been his etymological and philological errors, must be honored by all students of religion. He began his work before the data were in; but he should at least have the credit of making a hole in the subject, through which the data might come in. However, the speculative conception of religion was not so thoroughly destroyed by the reaction against speculative philosophy in general as were the other great speculative conceptions of thought. Even after the rise of the scientific method, scientific philosophy spoke in its highest and proudest strain in the person of Hegel. Hegel constructs the whole of reality out of concepts. The concepts were for him, as for Plato, the ultimate realities of truths; and, accordingly, for him all reality was conceived out of philosophy. But this supremacy of speculative philosophy was not of long duration. And in Germany, Hegel's home, came the speediest and severest reaction—a reaction in which Hegelianism, the most speculative philosophy, was almost demolished. The little that was left fled to England, reappearing there in the teachings of Green and of the neo-Hegelian school. It is mainly, however, the ethical, the religious, and the political elements of Hegelianism that reappear in Green and in his school. English philosophy is religious and practical; and Green, though he was

himself by nature a speculative philosopher, as were also the Cambridge Platonists, was influenced by his environment to think mainly along the ethical, religious, and political lines of the speculative philosophy. Moreover, *a priori* conceptions, from the nature of the case, obtain with much more force in ethics and in religion, and even in politics, than in natural science. The doctrine of innate ideas, as formulated by Descartes and Malebranche, and developed by Spinoza in one direction and by Leibniz in another, suffered great loss, as respects its philological and scientific significance, from the attacks of Hobbes, Locke, and Hume. It has suffered even greater loss from the attacks of modern psychology. But, as respects its religious significance, it is still the basis upon which a school of students of religion build a philosophy of the subject. Even Kant, whose purpose it was, in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, to show the emptiness of *a priori* principles of real objective truth, founds his moral argument, in the *Critique of Practical Reason*, upon logical inferences. It is difficult clearly to differentiate them from the innate ideas of Descartes or of Leibniz. The speculative, or *a priori*, philosophy is most vital and strongest today in the ethical and religious thought of men. It finds in that thought a natural home; and it gives premises to religious faith, and a confidence in those premises which seem like knowledge. And religious faith has not failed to appreciate the advantage it could derive from a speculative philosophy, or been loth to make use of it; indeed, the history of religious thought almost inclines one to the opinion that faith of her own accord has demanded certain great *a priori* philosophical conceptions as necessary to her life. The philosophical presuppositions of the great oriental religions make up a large part of the content of those religions. The teachings of Philo, Moses Maimonides, and Moses Mendelssohn are evidences of the necessary philosophical relationships of Hebrew religion; and that the structure of Christian theology has been built largely out of philosophical material, one needs only to read the fourth gospel, Justin Martyr, Albertus Magnus, Anselm, Thomas Aquinas, and Calvin, to see. To be sure, there has often been opposition, and even hostility, between the domi-

nant systems of religion, or of theology, and philosophy. Socrates was condemned and executed as a contemner of the gods. Bruno and Galileo, Descartes and Spinoza, Hobbes and Locke, Leibniz and Wolff, Kant and Fichte, were all treated by the reigning system of religious tradition as foes; but, as Paulsen says, the cause of this hostility is to be found, not in the essential disparateness of religion and philosophy, "but in their close affinity. The battle is only between hostile brothers or sisters."

The situation as respects our discipline is then, in brief, something like this: There are two great schools of religious investigation, each of which has grown about a regulative conception of the method of study of religion. One of these schools investigates religion according to what I may call an *a priori* or a conceptual method, starting either with the postulate of direct immediate consciousness of God, of self, and of the world, as do Hegel and the Hegelians; or with the postulate of certain spiritual intuitions given in the nature of the mind or by the revelation from God, as have done most of the writers on philosophy and on the philosophy of religion, from Plato to Martineau. The other school investigates religion according to what I may call an experimental or historical, or more recently an anthropological, method; that is, it studies inductively customs, rites, ceremonies, languages, and comes at last, by induction and comparison of these external religious phenomena among both primitive peoples and those most highly civilized, to a systematized summary of the phenomena, which it calls the science of religion. This school does not pretend either to have so completed the induction as to make the discipline a science in the strict sense of the word—for it recognizes that it cannot get at all the data necessary—or to have gotten at the essence of religion. By religion, says Tiele, "We mean . . . the aggregate of all those phenomena which are invariably termed religious, in contradistinction to ethical, æsthetical, theological, and others. I mean those manifestations of the human mind in words, in duties, customs, and institutions which justify a man's belief in the superhuman, and serve to bring him into relation with it."² Tiele's seeming exclusion of the belief of which

² *Elements of the Science of Religion*, p. 4.

those phenomena are manifestations from his tentative definition of religion should be noted here. He seems to think that this belief, as well as the reality of its foundation or source, belongs to metaphysic, and that it is not a matter of concern to the science of religion. "The object of our science," he says, "is . . . religion based on belief in the superhuman."² We may grant that the question of the reality of the foundation or source of this belief is a problem of metaphysic; yet I think we must say that the science of religion ought to include the belief itself as one of the initial phenomena to be taken into account.

But in order to a clear reason for the point of view for which I am pleading, may I dwell a little longer upon the present situation of our discipline and upon the history leading to that situation? There is just now among the anthropologists themselves much dissatisfaction with the rigidly inductive and historical study of religious customs, rites, ceremonies, etc.; which dissatisfaction has a number of causes, one of which is that the belief by which only rituals and ceremonies may be understood is not included in such study; and another of which is that the exclusive study of cult, ritual and ceremony has resulted, not in one great interpretative result or set of results concerning the discipline as a whole, but in many varying and sometimes mutually exclusive and contradictory results. The various theories of the physical origins of religion, such as animism, ghost- and ancestor-worship, are evidences of the lack of consensus as to results. Books like Fraser's *Golden Bough*, and the mythological theory of primitive religion in general, have no severer critics than the anthropologists. In a conversation which the writer once had with Tylor and Waitz both of them remarked that the mere anthropological study of religion has become unproductive of much valuable knowledge as to the real essence of religion. Again, to quote Tiele, who was one of the most widely learned students of religion in Europe—alas for the science of religion now deceased! After pleading for the denominative "science" and for the scientific method in the study of religion, and after declaring himself to be primarily a historian in method and feeling, he says:

² *Ibid.*, p. 4.

Yet I believe that the science of religion requires a broader foundation than history, in the ordinary sense of the word, and historical research must precede and pave the way for our science; but it does not belong to it. If I have minutely described all the religions in existence, their doctrines, methods, customs, the observance they inculcate, and the organization of their adherents, besides tracing the different religions, their origin, bloom, and decay, I have merely collected the materials with which the science of religion works. And indispensable as this is, it is not enough. I therefore think that we need not hesitate openly to proclaim the philosophical character of our science, and to apply to it the method adapted to all philosophical branches of science, namely the deductive. Not the one-sided empirical method which culminates in positivism and only ascertains and classifies facts, but is powerless to extend them. Nor the one-sided historical method which yields exclusively historical results. Not again the genetic, speculative method, a mixture of history and philosophy, which lacks all unity. Still less, I must hasten to add, the warped speculative method, which has no foothold on earth, but floats on the clouds. . . . I think that we should neglect nothing, but welcome everything that may give light. In the doctrine, whatever be its form, mythological and poetical, or dogmatic and philosophical, I recognize the fountain head of each religion. The chief thing of all religion is doubtless its spirit, yet it is the doctrine that affords us most light. Cult, ritual, and ceremonies teach me nothing when I contemplate them, unless I have some explanation of their meaning.

And Professor Hopkins, in his *Religions of India*, says of the ritual of sacrifice:

Even a résumé of one comparatively short ceremony would be so long and tedious that the explication of the intricate formalities would scarcely be a sufficient reward. With Hillebrandt's patient analysis of the new- and full-moon sacrifice, of which a sketch is given by von Schroeder in his *Literature and Culture*, the curious reader will be able to satisfy himself that a minute description of these ceremonies would do little to further his knowledge of the religion, when once he grasps the fact that the sacrifice is but show.

These quotations, and others that might be cited, indicate a profound dissatisfaction, in the inductive or historical school itself, with a merely anthropological method of studying religion, and a certain lack of unity as to any method or concept according to which religion is to be studied. Nor is the philosophical school at unity with itself. There is the orthodox, or traditional, wing of the school which holds to the doctrine of original intuitions *plus* supernatural or miraculous revelation; there are Hegel and the Hegelians, such as Green, the Cairds,

and Pfliegerer; and there are others, like Martineau, who make intuitions the manner and the content of revelation. The position of the traditional wing of the school is so well known as not to need any specification; though it is somewhat difficult to locate it in the history of philosophy, and to describe it philosophically or psychologically. In the persons of Augustine, Anselm, Descartes, and others it formulated a philosophic doctrine of innate ideas by which the existence of God is immediately and necessarily postulated; but it does not consider those ideas the sufficient content of religious knowledge. It supplements the knowledge given innately by a miraculous revelation from God, not, however, attempting any theory of the method of human apprehension of that revelation, except the philosophical thesis of faith; that is, the thesis of a spirit or heart faculty of apprehension, of which the reason has no knowledge. In the persons of Hobbes and Locke it denies the doctrine of innate ideas, and makes religious knowledge wholly a matter of revelation. Hobbes says there are three ways of knowing God: first, through the tacit dictates of righteousness (righteousness being the social conscience, the harmony of society, not an innate idea of right); secondly, through immediate revelation in supernatural voice, or vision, or dream; thirdly, through a prophet. According to Hobbes, we have no idea of God, because the finite cannot conceive the infinite. Both Hobbes and Locke were religiously and theologically committed to the idea that the object-matter, the thing known, of religion is given by revelation. Hobbes held to the Erastian principle that this revelation is the basis of civil order, the supreme authority authenticated by miracle and by supernatural prophecy, vision, or dream, and constituting the essence of civil government; while Locke, by reason of his doctrine of the limitation of knowledge, and by reason of his conviction that the ethical completeness of men necessitates religion, was compelled to assume an object miraculously given to faith. Locke starts, then, from an *a priori* faith which it is the business of religion to justify. The idea of God is not innate, and is not given in sense-experience, but is given in faith, and is verified or cor-

roborated by the application of reason to faith. Reason is for Locke the comparing and relating of ideas given in sense-perception, or, in the religious sphere, in faith. As Fraser says, reason is, in the philosophy of Locke, merely "discursive intelligence." For Locke and Hobbes all that comes from the outer world, whether of things or of spirit, must be apprehended by the senses. Nevertheless, they must both be classed among the *a priori* philosophers of religion—in so far as they are philosophers of religion at all—because both postulate elements or powers in the mind by which a transcendental revelation is conceived and judged.

Hence Hume was perfectly consistent in rejecting, as in fact *a priori*, those elements in the philosophy of Hobbes and Locke upon which they built theology. If religious thought was to flow on beyond Hume, it must have been, not by the force of his reasoning, but by the force of the reasoning of men, who found in the human mind a power of apprehension of objects, whether or not given to the senses, yet not delimited and determined by the nature of sense-phenomena. To find the real stream of religious thinking, we must follow in the line of Kant, Hegel, Schleiermacher, and Green, who, while differing widely in many respects, have this one characteristic that they all construe religion according to the principles of a philosophical idealism, not identifying religion and philosophy, but making the principle or method of knowledge the same in both. And the point of interest to us, in tracing the thought of the philosophers about religion, is that the point of connection of their religious and their philosophic thought is their theory of knowledge. When Kant finds that he cannot get by his theory of knowledge to the *Ding an sich* of the world, he passes easily over to an application of that theory to the search for the moral and religious *Ding an sich*. He seems himself to have thought that he was successful in that search, and that from that great *ought* which he found in his mind he could get easily to God, and could verify easily to knowledge divine revelation and command, by recognizing his duty as such divine revelation and command. We see now how unsuccessful Kant was in giving us any sure principle of knowl-

edge of God; because it was really only an arbitrary act of will by which he transformed this idea of oughtness, which in the *Critique of Pure Reason* he has told us is only an idea of a subject, the reality of which we have no means of knowing. As Caird says:

Only a Reality which can recognize that the consciousness of the moral law is not a "mere Idea" of the subject—an Idea that merely ought to be realized—but rather that it is one form of the consciousness of that religious principle which is always realizing itself in us and without us, and to which therefore we give the name God, can avoid the alternative of a Rationalism which denies all contact between the subject and an objective reality, and a Mysticism which asserts such contact as an absolutely intelligible fact.³

It is just exactly that idealism to which Hegel unequivocally commits himself. Kant could not but in some measure adhere in a critical philosophy to the empirical skepticism of the eighteenth century, which he criticises, and between which and the older idealism he is trying to mediate; and though he makes the way for German idealistic philosophy, his own idealism is formal and critical rather than substantial. Hegel, on the other hand, breaks absolutely with empiricism, and it is that break that makes Hegel really the father, not only of modern philosophic idealism, but also of the modern philosophy of religion. Yet Hegel does not reach his doctrine of universal idealism in the way that Kant must have done, if he had gone on to substantial idealism, *i. e.*, by the arbitrary predication of absolute reality to the ideas of the subject, but as Plato did in his doctrine of ideas. Hegel makes an assumption, but not the assumption that Kant makes. Hegel goes farther back, to one mighty assumption, about the cause of the ideas. The dualism of man and the world must be thought as embraced in a Unity, a Universal. We can and must think of them together, and that very thinking of them together is a Universum in thought. This Universum, this Absolute, with which we think when we include all the phenomena of sense and all the phenomena of our minds in one, is the Reality of which they are parts, and is revealed in them as parts. But this Universum is thought; therefore thought is the reality; and the subject's idea of Universum or Absolute is the registration, so to speak, of the Abso-

³ *Critical Philosophy of Kant*, Vol. II, p. 620.

lute in one of its parts, viz., the subject: it is the revelation of the Absolute to itself. The idea does not make the Absolute, but the Absolute is and makes the idea. Yet this Universal thought, this Absolute, is, according to Hegel, not simply the sum of the world and of man. So Hegel guards himself from the pantheism of Spinoza. The Absolute is more, and in a sense, other than the world; it is more and in a sense other than the ideas. The world and the ideas of man are the Absolute revealing itself to itself in two ways. We see, then, what Hegel's theory of knowledge in religion must be. Religion is for him philosophy known in mind and realized in feeling, or it is the activity of the whole life of man. Of course, he must make the assumption that the Absolute is spirit, or God; and, having made it, his theory of knowledge in religion becomes identical with his theory of knowledge in philosophy. God registers himself as Idea in man. Religion is God operating in man; and the knowledge of religion is both immediate—*i. e.*, the knowledge of self-consciousness—and mediate—*i. e.*, the knowledge given in the categories of understanding and reason. It is this mediate knowledge of religion, by the way, that gives us the content and determines worship. Hegel is very careful to distinguish between immediate and mediate knowledge, immediate knowledge of God being the result of God's existence in human consciousness, the thinking by man of God, which thinking is an activity of God himself; and mediate knowledge being the result of reflection upon the truth given in immediate knowledge, and upon its relations and determination.

I must hasten to a brief statement of the positions of two of the most recent writers on the philosophy of religion from the *a priori* point of view—Martineau, who speaks the traditions of Spinoza, Herder, and Schleiermacher rather than of Hegel; and Edward Caird, who speaks, to some extent at least, the traditions of Hegel and Green. These two men seem to me to be particularly important, because, though they continue the traditions of philosophy in the study of religion, they are both thoroughly acquainted with the modern scientific method as used in the study, and also with modern psychology and the effects upon that

psychology of biological evolution; yet, curiously enough, does neither one of them criticise thoroughly and profoundly his own theory of knowledge, or the metaphysical assumptions upon which he bases his constructive theory of religion, in the light of the absolutely necessary implications in psychology, and so in all psychical products—of which religion is one—and of our modern knowledge of biological evolution. Martineau begins his whole study of the subject with the assertion,⁴ quoting Kant,⁵ that metaphysics has discovered “that for all phenomena of experience we are obliged to supply in thought a transcendental object, as their ground,” and with the assumption of two fundamental intuitions as the source of religion, viz., intuition of causality and intuition of right. He does, indeed, devote a number of pages to a discussion of a theory of knowledge, reviewing the theories of Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Schopenhauer, Mill, and Spencer, but rather for the purpose of maintaining his thesis of the religious intuitions than to get down to that real root of the matter which must be laid bare before a scientific theory of knowledge can be formulated. For example, he uses Kant’s doctrine of space and time as *a priori* conceptions (*Vorstellungen*), or forms of sense-perception. Martineau, by the way, follows Trendelenburg in making space and time objectively as well as transcendently real, as a means of getting his own *a priori* intuitions of causality.⁶ And as he proceeds in his review of the doctrine of knowledge from Kant to Spencer, one cannot see that he frees himself from the old metaphysical doctrine that the theory of knowledge is a matter entirely of the existence or non-existence of an external world; whereas it is really not, or need not be now, necessarily connected with the doctrine of such existence or non-existence. Of course, one’s theory of knowledge would be profoundly affected by his denial of an external world; but psychology does not deny it, indeed does not particularly concern itself with that doctrine; and an epistemology which is in accord with psychology ought not to concern itself with that doctrine. Psychology studies mental phenomena as phenomena, and epistemology

⁴ *Study of Religion*, Preface, p. viii.

⁵ *Critique of Pure Reason*, Vol. II, p. 422.

⁶ *Study of Religion*, Vol. I, pp. 61 ff.

studies that one of the mental phenomena which is called knowledge, and which, when first considered, appears as the reaction of mind upon the stimulus of the senses. That appearance is the starting-point of the strict study of epistemology. The nature of that which lies behind the appearance is a matter of metaphysics. Martineau's theory of knowledge bases itself upon the doctrine of the objective reality of the external world, which world is known by us because its structural principles, substance, and causality are *a priori* intuitions of the mind. His theory of religious knowledge is the same, except that he adds another intuition, that of right, which gives us cognizance of spirits and of God. That cognizance is synonymous with revelation. Intuition in religion and revelation are then really one; or, rather, intuition is the mode of revelation. Martineau really dispenses with all the sense-element, making ethical intuitions the whole and sufficient basis of religion.

Professor Edward Caird, although called a Hegelian, and really continuing the great Hegelian conception of the knowledge of the infinite as a consciousness of the unity in which the world and man are embraced, starts out, in his theory of knowledge, directly from a comparison and combination of the theories of Professor Max Müller and Mr. Spencer. Professor Müller refers to Spinoza's famous dictum "*Omnis determinatio est negatio*," and makes our consciousness of the infinite a negation of the finite—a sort of consciousness of the beyond which outlines our field of knowledge of self and the world. Spencer returns rather to the Spinozistic principle that the consciousness of the infinite is the presupposition of the consciousness of the finite, the *prius* of all positive knowledge, when he considers the infinite as both unknown and unknowable; it simply is. Professor Caird's criticism of Max Müller's view is that it is bare negation, yielding only a bigger finite, which is limited or determined by the first finite; and of Mr. Spencer's view his criticism is that it destroys knowledge, even of the finite, in that it makes unknowable the ultimate reality which conditions the reality of the finite. It opposes irreconcilably our thought of things to the reality of those things; yet, according to Caird, both of these views contain truth. There is a consciousness of the infinite

which is negation of the finite, and a consciousness also of the finite as presupposing and as conditioned by the infinite. That is, both consciousnesses are one, the differentiation for us being the result of differing mental processes, synthesis and analysis. Yet Caird does not, as Hegel did not, mean to make God simply the sum of self and not-self, but a higher unity, in which they both get their true meaning.⁷ Caird is an evolutionist, and Hegel was not. For Hegel the consciousness of God was first given as an *a priori* principle in the human mind. For Caird, though it is in a true sense an *a priori* principle—*i. e.*, not continentally given as the result of sense-perception—it comes at the end of a systematic or organic process of education. God is organically the primal unity of self and not-self; therefore, as man's knowledge evolves it goes back to the consciousness of that primal unity, or God, as fundamental to its ideas of self and not-self. Evolution of knowledge seems to be for Professor Caird a matter of time. In the order of time we are conscious, first of particulars, then of the universal, which in nature is first. As Aristotle said, "what is first in nature comes last in genesis." But the consciousness of God is not a sum of added knowledges; it is generally inborn, only not at first realized. And here Caird, by his use of the principle of knowledge, is able to fill a gap in Hegel's doctrine. Hegel jumps to the content of the idea of God; Caird gets it as the result of the evolution of knowledge. The filling up of the content of the ideas of self and the world fills up also the content of the idea of God. We approach true knowledge of God as we gain deeper, fuller knowledge of ourselves and of the world, the intensive content of the idea of God growing as the content of the ideas of self and of the world grows.

If I have presented correctly the development of thought about the object, and the method, of knowledge in religion, it has become plain that the present situation is highly unsatisfactory; that we have come, in fact, to a stopping-place; and also that we need to look for some new conception according to which the study of religion may proceed. This review has been

⁷ *The Evolution of Religion*, Vol. I, pp. 105 ff.

for the purpose of emphasizing the importance of a method which Professor Brinton calls the psychologic method, and which, he says,⁸ is well known to students of our discipline. I should like to call it the epistemologic view; for to my mind epistemology is a discipline sufficiently dignified and inclusive to yield us a method for the study of religion. Professor Tiele gives the conception when he says: "The chief thing in all religion is doubtless its spirit, yet it is the doctrine that affords us most light."⁹ May I go farther, and say that the best and most nearly adequate expressions of the spirit of religion are its ritual and its doctrine, and that the ritual and the doctrine afford nearly all the light we can get? The first question to be asked in the study of religion is: What are we directly studying? How do we get hold of the subject? The word "religion" means nothing to us at first; it is only a name. The question is: What does the name connote? It is, it seems to me, the fault of the anthropological school that it has never satisfactorily answered the question. To go back to the criticism of Professor Tiele which I made above, it has studied customs and ceremonies and institutions, but it has neglected the faith to which these customs and ceremonies and institutions testify. We agree most heartily with Tiele that such facts as customs, rites and ceremonies, which anthropology exhibits to us, must be studied in so far as they express or throw light upon faith and convictions; and also that the history of religions must furnish us material. We must study religion as it was in order to understand it as it is. But if the doctrine of evolution be true, the nature of a germ must be more easily and better understood in the evolved product than in the simple germ. Hence Caird is so far right in that he argues for a study of the highest types of religion in order to the studying of its nature and reality. The merely anthropological method has loaded the subject with unexplained and unrelated facts, with an enormous compilation of customs, rites, and ceremonies, and has not used that which alone can serve as a principle of classification and explanation—their liturgical and doctrinal signification. It has not begun at the proper point and with the

⁸ *Religions of Primitive People*, p. 6. ⁹ *Elements of the Science of Religion*, p. 22.

proper material, viz., the beliefs and thoughts underlying religious actions. If we were studying only the religion of a primitive people, then we should have nothing else to study but customs, rites, and ceremonies; but we know that religion has evolved into thought-expression, and therefore to continue a compilation of customs is only to clutter the subject and to lead ourselves astray by refusing to use what the evolutionary process has put into our hands.

But, on the other hand, we may not now begin within any *a priori* hypothesis. I have tried to show that there is no consensus among the authorities of the *a priori* school, and that, from the nature of the case, there can be no consensus. The root of the whole *a priori* assumption, whatever be its form, has been cut by modern psychology and biology. As Professor Sabatier says:¹⁰ "Psychology has long since dispelled the scientific illusion of idealism." Modern psychology allows us to attribute to what we call the mind certain powers, certain modes of arrangement of the presentations of experience, according to which these presentations are co-ordinated and translated into thought; but it does not allow us to ascribe eternally necessary transcendental content to the modes of the mind's reacting upon experience. Call these modes categories, or principles of the understanding, or what you will; they are but simple forms without experience, shells without kernels. Experience is necessary to give them content. As Professor Sabatier says again:¹¹ "Pure idealism, so far from furnishing a solid theory of knowledge, ends in skepticism, *i. e.*, in the negation of knowledge." I am well aware that Professor James, in the last chapter of his *Psychology*, argues for a certain transcendental element in knowledge, for ideas which, as he phrases it, come in "at the back door of the mind." But those ideas even need experience to set them at work and to give them a real calculable content. Furthermore, biology has a voice in this matter. How can the mind have as part of its structure universally and absolutely necessary ideas, immediate intuitions of infinite truth, if the doctrine of biology be true that the mind itself, and of course then its content, be

¹⁰ *Outlines of Philosophy of Religion*, p. 280. ¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 281.

the product of an evolutionary process which, we have good reason for believing, is by no means exhausted, and therefore well included in the limits of the finite?

It does not seem necessary to argue further that we have no right to assume for the mind such ideas and intuitions upon which it may build a religion.

I think, then, we can easily see the necessity of a psychologic and epistemologic method for the study of religion. Professor Brinton says¹² that the psychologic method is the crown and completion of the quest; and Professor Granger says that "all mythology and all history of beliefs must finally turn to psychology for their satisfactory elucidation."¹³ For if all study is a matter of presentation and conception, and so a matter of psychology, religion is surely a matter of psychology. That is to say, the laws of mental phenomena must explain religion as one of those phenomena. To quote again, Professor Brinton says¹⁴ that what seems to him the most startling discovery of recent times is the discovery that the human mind works apparently as a machine; give it the same materials and it will infallibly grind out the same product. But, startling as it is, we must accept it. The fact is well established that the origin of ideas is due to impressions on the nerves of sense: the same or similar impressions will always give the same or similar results. The laws of the environment are the laws of the psychic life. Technically, Professor Ward may not be right when he speaks of the mind as "presentation continuum,"¹⁵ a stream of mental phenomena. But we must be prepared in the study of religion to count on such a possibility and to treat religion as we must treat all other ideas. We must study it, not as a set of physical actions on the one side, or of assumed *a priori* ideas on the other, but as a series of mental phenomena, which are the results of sense stimulus and psychic reaction upon that stimulus; we must ascertain, from a study of history and language, the ideas of which rites and customs are the expression. The canon of criticism in religion

¹² *Study of Primitive Religion*, p. 6.

¹³ *Worship of the Romans*, p. vii.

¹⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. vi.

¹⁵ The article "Psychology" in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

is given in epistemology, in the theory of knowledge. The question is: What are the ideas and how did we get them? We must not be afraid even of the belief that knowledge in religion comes through sense-experience. It is only an *a priori* dogma, after all, that God cannot be known in such experience. The greatest religious geniuses claimed sense-experience of the divine. Paul grounds, if we may trust the account in Acts, all that is most truly spiritual in him on his Damascus experience. And in later times men have done the same. Augustine, Luther, and hundreds of lesser men have founded their religious lives on some initial experience known in terms of sense. Perhaps such sense-experience may be possible only to morbid physical and nervous constitutions. Professor James, in his *Varieties of Religious Experience*, intimates that Paul was probably an epileptic; but, as Professor James truly says, we judge things, not by their beginnings, but by their fruits. Surely, the virtues of the lives of such men as Sakya Muni, Zoroaster, Paul, Augustine, Luther, constitute the very efflorescence and summit of moral and religious thinking and attainment; and, whatever be the origin, we may accept the dictum of him who had the profoundest experience of God, and is consequently the greatest of religious teachers: "By their fruits ye shall know them."